

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

UGOCHUKWU ONODU

§
§
§
§
§

CRIMINAL NO. 15-260

PLEA AGREEMENT

The United States of America, by and through Kenneth Magidson, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Texas, and Jim McAlister, Assistant United States Attorney, and Defendant, Ugochukwu Onodu, and Defendant's counsel, pursuant to Rule 11(c)(1)(A) and/or 11(c)(1)(B) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, state that they have entered into an agreement, the terms and conditions of which are as follows:

The Defendant's Agreement

1. Defendant agrees to plead guilty to Count Seventeen (17) of the Superseding Indictment. Count Seventeen (17) charges Defendant with Theft by Receiving Stolen Money in violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 641. Defendant, by entering this plea, agrees that he is waiving any right to have the facts that the law makes essential to the punishment either charged in the Indictment or proven to a jury or judge beyond a reasonable doubt.

Punishment Range

2. The **statutory** maximum penalty for each violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 641, is a term of imprisonment of not more than Ten (10) years and a fine of not more than \$ 250,000. Additionally, Defendant may receive a term of supervised release after imprisonment of (up to) three (3) years. Title 18, United States Code, §§ 3559(a) and 3583(b). Defendant acknowledges and understands that if he/she should violate the conditions of any

period of supervised release which may be imposed as part of his/her sentence, then Defendant may be imprisoned for the entire term of supervised release, without credit for time already served on the term of supervised release prior to such violation. Title 18, United States Code, §§ 3559(a) and 3583(e)(3). Defendant understands that he/she cannot have the imposition or execution of the sentence suspended, nor is he/she eligible for parole.

Mandatory Special Assessment

3. Pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, § 3013(a)(2)(A), immediately after sentencing, Defendant will pay to the Clerk of the United States District Court a special assessment in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per count of conviction. The payment will be by cashier's check or money order payable to the Clerk of the United States District Court, c/o District Clerk's Office, P.O. Box 61010, Houston, Texas 77208, Attention: Finance.

Immigration Consequences

4. Defendant recognizes that pleading guilty may have consequences with respect to his/her immigration status if he/she is not a citizen of the United States. Defendant understands that if he/she is not a citizen of the United States, by pleading guilty he/she may be removed from the United States, denied citizenship, and denied admission to the United States in the future. Defendant's attorney has advised Defendant of the potential immigration consequences resulting from Defendant's plea of guilty.

Waiver of Appeal

5. Defendant is aware that Title 28, United States Code, § 1291, and Title 18, United States Code, § 3742, afford a defendant the right to appeal the conviction and sentence imposed. Defendant knowingly and voluntarily waives the right to appeal the conviction and the sentence imposed, or the manner in which the sentence was determined. Additionally, Defendant is aware that Title 28, United States Code, § 2255, affords the right to contest or “collaterally attack” a conviction or sentence after the conviction or sentence has become final. Defendant knowingly and voluntarily waives the right to contest his/her conviction or sentence by means of any post-conviction proceeding. In the event the Defendant files a notice of appeal following the imposition of the sentence, the United States will assert its rights under this agreement and seek specific performance of this waiver.

6. In agreeing to these waivers, Defendant is aware that a sentence has not yet been determined by the Court. Defendant is also aware that any estimate of the possible sentencing range under the Sentencing Guidelines that he/she may have received from his/her counsel, the United States, or the Probation Office, is a prediction, not a promise, and such estimate did not induce his guilty plea and is binding on neither the United States, the Probation Office, nor the Court. The United States does not make any promise or representation concerning what sentence Defendant will receive. Defendant further understands and agrees that the Sentencing Guidelines are “effectively advisory” to the Court. *United States v. Booker*, 125 S.Ct. 738 (2005). Accordingly, Defendant understands that, although the Court must consult the Sentencing Guidelines and must take them into account when sentencing Defendant, the Court is not bound to follow the Sentencing Guidelines nor sentence Defendant within the calculated guideline range.

7. Defendant understands and agrees that each and all waivers contained in the Agreement are made in exchange for the concessions made by the United States in this Plea Agreement.

The United States' Agreements

8. The United States agrees to each of the following:

(a) If Defendant pleads guilty to Count ¹⁷(~~19~~) of the superseding indictment and persists in that plea through sentencing, and if the Court accepts this Plea Agreement, the United States will move to dismiss ALL remaining counts of the original indictment and the superseding indictment at the time of sentencing;

(b) At the time of sentencing, the United States agrees not to oppose Defendant's anticipated request to the Court and the United States Probation Office that he receive a two (2)- level downward adjustment under § 3E1.1(a) of the Sentencing Guidelines should Defendant accept responsibility as contemplated by the Sentencing Guidelines (U.S.S.G.);

(c) If Defendant qualifies for an adjustment under U.S.S.G. § 3E1.1(a) and Defendant's offense level is 16 or greater, the United States may move for an additional one (1)-level downward adjustment based on the timeliness of the plea or the expeditious manner in which Defendant provided complete information regarding his role in the offense.

Agreement Binding - Southern District of Texas Only

9. The United States agrees that it will not further criminally prosecute Defendant in the Southern District of Texas for offenses arising from conduct charged in the Indictment. This Plea Agreement binds only the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas and Defendant. It does not bind any other United States Attorney. The United States will bring this Plea Agreement and the full extent of Defendant's cooperation to the attention of other prosecuting offices if requested.

United States' Non-Waiver of Appeal

10. The United States reserves the right to carry out its responsibilities under the Sentencing Guidelines. Specifically, the United States reserves the right:

- (a) to bring its version of the facts of this case, including its evidence file and any investigative files, to the attention of the Probation Office in connection with that office's preparation of a presentence report;
- (b) to set forth or dispute sentencing factors or facts material to sentencing;
- (c) to seek resolution of such factors or facts in conference with Defendant's counsel and the Probation Office;
- (d) to file a pleading relating to these issues, in accordance with U.S.S.G. § 6A1.2 and Title 18, United States Code, § 3553(a); and
- (a) to appeal the sentence imposed or the manner in which it was determined.

Sentence Determination

11. Defendant is aware that the sentence will be imposed after consideration of the Sentencing Guidelines, which are only advisory, as well as the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, § 3553(a). Defendant nonetheless acknowledges and agrees that the Court has authority to impose any sentence up to and including the statutory maximum set for the offense(s) to which Defendant pleads guilty, and that the sentence to be imposed is within the sole discretion of the sentencing judge after the Court has consulted the applicable Sentencing Guidelines. Defendant understands and agrees the parties' positions regarding the application of the Sentencing Guidelines do not bind the Court, and that the sentence imposed is within the discretion of the sentencing judge. If the Court should impose any sentence up to the maximum established by statute, or should the Court order any or all of the sentences imposed to run consecutively, Defendant cannot, for that reason alone, withdraw a guilty plea, and will remain bound to fulfill all of the obligations under this Plea Agreement.

Rights at Trial

12. Defendant represents to the Court that he/she is satisfied that his/her attorney has rendered effective assistance. Defendant understands that by entering into this Agreement, he/she surrenders certain rights as provided in this Plea Agreement. Defendant understands that those rights include the following:

- (a) If Defendant persisted in a plea of not guilty to the charges, Defendant would have the right to a speedy jury trial with the assistance of counsel. The trial may be conducted by a judge sitting without a jury if Defendant, the United States, and the court all agree.
- (b) At a trial, the United States would be required to present witnesses and other evidence against Defendant. Defendant would have the opportunity to confront those witnesses and his/her attorney would be allowed to cross-examine them. In turn, Defendant could, but would not be required to, present witnesses and other evidence on his/her own behalf. If the witnesses for Defendant would not appear voluntarily, he/she could require their attendance through the subpoena power of the court.
- (c) At a trial, Defendant could rely on a privilege against self-incrimination and decline to testify, and no inference of guilt could be drawn from such refusal to testify. However, if Defendant desired to do so, he/she could testify on his/her own behalf.

Factual Basis for Guilty Plea

13. Defendant is pleading guilty because he is guilty of the charges contained in Count Seventeen (17) of the Superseding Indictment. If this case were to proceed to trial, the United States could prove each element of the offense beyond a reasonable doubt. The following facts, among others would be offered to establish Defendant's guilt:

4

On or about December 201~~4~~⁵, an imposter contacted the Social Security Administration (SSA) and supplied identifiers for a beneficiary, S.M. (Steven Miller). The imposter changed the banking information for Mr. Miller's Federal Social Security retirement account and requested payment of back benefits. The funds in Mr. Miller's Federal Social Security retirement account were the property of the United States, but access to the funds was obtained through Mr. Miller's account.

On or about, December 9, 201⁴~~8~~, the SSA sent \$26,736.20 in federal money to the new bank account number provided by the imposter, which was an account number of the defendant at Bank of America, ending in the numbers 8002. The defendant withdrew the money with the intent to convert the money to his own use and sent a portion of the funds to those who assisted with the theft scheme.

The defendant stipulates and agrees that, though he did not know the source of the funds, he received money that he knew was stolen or embezzled with the intent to deprive the owner of the use of the money.

Breach of Plea Agreement

14. If Defendant should fail in any way to fulfill completely all of the obligations under this Plea Agreement, the United States will be released from its obligations under the Plea Agreement, and Defendant's plea and sentence will stand. If at any time Defendant retains, conceals or disposes of assets in violation of this Plea Agreement, or if Defendant knowingly withholds evidence or is otherwise not completely truthful with the United States, then the United States may move the Court to set aside the guilty plea and reinstate prosecution. Any information and documents that have been disclosed by Defendant, whether prior to or subsequent to this Plea Agreement, and all leads derived therefrom, will be used against Defendant in any prosecution.

Restitution

15. Defendant agrees to pay full restitution to the victim(s) regardless of the count(s) of conviction. Defendant stipulates and agrees that as a result of his criminal conduct, the United States incurred a monetary loss of at least \$ 140,000. Defendant understands and agrees that the Court will determine the amount of restitution to fully compensate the victim, which is the United States. Defendant agrees that restitution imposed by the Court will be due and payable immediately and that Defendant will not attempt to avoid or delay payment. Defendant waives the right to challenge in any manner, including by direct appeal or in a collateral proceeding, the restitution order imposed by the Court.

Fines


16. Defendant understands that under the Sentencing Guidelines the Court is permitted to order Defendant to pay a fine that is sufficient to reimburse the government for the costs of any imprisonment or term of supervised release, if any. Defendant agrees that any fine imposed by the Court will be due and payable immediately, and Defendant will not attempt to avoid or delay payment. Defendant waives the right to challenge the fine in any manner, including by direct appeal or in a collateral proceeding.

Complete Agreement

17. This written Plea Agreement, consisting of Ten (10) pages, including the attached addendum of Defendant and his/her attorney, constitutes the complete Plea Agreement between the United States, Defendant, and his/her counsel. No promises or representations have been made by the United States except as set forth in writing in this Plea Agreement. Defendant acknowledges that no threats have been made against him/her and that he/she is pleading guilty freely and voluntarily because he/she is guilty.

18. Any modification of this Plea Agreement must be in writing and signed by all parties.

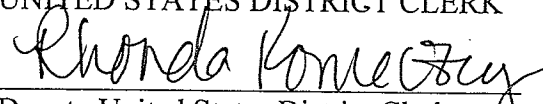
Filed at Houston, Texas, on November 30, 2015.



Ugochukwu Onodu
Defendant

Subscribed and sworn to before me on Nov 30, 2015.

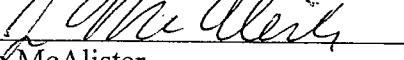
DAVID J. BRADLEY, Clerk
UNITED STATES DISTRICT CLERK

By: 

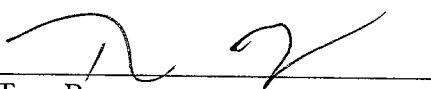
Deputy United States District Clerk

APPROVED:

Kenneth Magidson
United States Attorney

By: 

Jim McAlister
Assistant United States Attorney
Southern District of Texas



Tom Berg
Attorney for Defendant

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

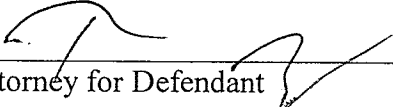
UGOCHUKWU ONODU

§
§
§
§
§

CRIMINAL NO. 15-260

PLEA AGREEMENT - ADDENDUM

I have fully explained to Defendant his/her rights with respect to the pending Indictment. I have reviewed the provisions of the United States Sentencing Commission's Guidelines Manual and Policy Statements and I have fully and carefully explained to Defendant the provisions of those Guidelines which may apply in this case. I have also explained to Defendant that the Sentencing Guidelines are only advisory and the court may sentence Defendant up to the maximum allowed by statute per count of conviction. Further, I have carefully reviewed every part of this Plea Agreement with Defendant. To my knowledge, Defendant's decision to enter into this Agreement is an informed and voluntary one.

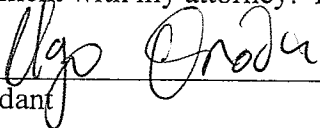


Attorney for Defendant

11/30/15

Date

I have consulted with my attorney and fully understand all my rights with respect to the Indictment pending against me. My attorney has fully explained and I understand all my rights with respect to the provisions of the United States Sentencing Commission's Guidelines Manual which may apply in my case. I have read and carefully reviewed every part of this Plea Agreement with my attorney. I understand this Agreement and I voluntarily agree to its terms.



Defendant

11/30/15

Date